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RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6585
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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PE](#)
SUBJECT: ELECTION UPDATE: HUMALA PULLING AWAY AS FLORES
CONTINUES TO SLIDE

REF: LIMA 979

Sensitive but Unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

SUMMARY

1. (SBU) Ultra-nationalist, "outsider," Union por el Peru (UPP) presidential candidate Ollanta Humala took over first place in the latest national poll by the Apoyo consultancy, performed 3/15-17, rising one point to 32 percent, while former front-runner, center-right Unidad Nacional candidate Lourdes Flores, fell three points to 28 percent. APRA party candidate (and former President) Alan Garcia dropped one point to 21 percent. Given that this poll does not/not reflect the views of approximately 20 percent of the electorate living in isolated rural areas, who are more likely to vote for Humala or Garcia than for Flores, Humala's actual support is probably higher. In the congressional race, APRA, Unidad Nacional and UPP remained 1,2,3, but all lost ground to smaller parties, with the Alliance for the Future moving up three points, and President Toledo's Peru Posible party and centrist Congressman Natale Amprimo's Alliance for Progress party reaching the four percent nationwide vote threshold to place candidates in Congress.
END SUMMARY.

THE LATEST POLL RESULTS

2. (U) The Apoyo poll interviewed 2000 people in 77 provinces around the country, representing 81 percent of the Peruvian population. When asked which candidate they would vote for if the election were held that day, the response was:

Ollanta Humala	32 percent (up two percent from one week ago)
Lourdes Flores	28 percent (down three percent)
Alan Garcia	21 percent (down one percent)
Martha Chavez	7 percent (up two percent)
Valentin Paniagua	6 percent (up one percent)
Others	6 percent (down one percent)

The results are based on the "valid vote" count, which excludes votes cast in blank or respondents who did not name a candidate. In the Apoyo poll, 84 percent of respondents

provided "valid votes," which are the ballots that the election authorities will use to determine the final results.

This is up from 74 percent last week (Reftel), indicating that formerly undecided voters are increasingly coming down for Humala.

13. (U) The Apoyo poll continues to predict that none of the candidates are likely to win a majority of the vote. If this holds true on election day, there will be a second-round run-off between the two candidates receiving the most votes in the first round. According to the poll results, in a run-off Humala and Flores would tie 50-50 (last week Apoyo reported Flores would defeat Humala by 54-46 percent), while both Humala and Flores would handily beat Garcia.

14. (U) In the congressional race, APRA remained in first place with 22 percent, though it lost one point; Unidad Nacional held on to second although it fell two points to 18 percent; and UPP stayed third although it too fell one point to 16 percent. The parties that gained were the Alliance for the Future, which jumped three points to 12 percent (thanks to effective campaigning by ex-First Lady Keiko Fujimori, which appears to be attracting many of her father's supporters); President Toledo's Peru Posible party registered four percent (one of the minimum thresholds for winning a congressional seat), as did the centrist Alliance for Progress party, whose presidential candidate, Congressman Natale Amprimo, has angled effectively for the youth vote. Paniagua's Centrist Front fell one point to seven percent. The following table lists each party's support, while our calculations of the approximate proportional number of legislative slots that each party would take are in parenthesis:

APRA	22 percent (32 seats)
Unidad Nacional	18 percent (26 seats)
Union por el Peru	16 percent (23 seats)
Alliance for the Future	12 percent (17 seats)
Centrist Front	7 percent (10 seats)
Peru Posible	4 percent (6 seats)
Alliance for Progress	4 percent (6 seats)

(NOTE: The congressional races will be decided on a proportional basis in each of Peru's 25 electoral districts (the 24 departments and Callao, with metropolitan Lima grouped-in with Lima Department), rather than nationwide. Thus it is possible that the final distribution of seats will differ substantially from our rough calculations on a nationwide basis. In addition, while the law provides for a four percent minimum threshold for a party to place a legislator in Congress, there is an exception for those parties who manage to elect at least five representatives in two or more electoral districts. Consequently, it remains possible that a party with less than four percent of the national vote could obtain representation in Congress. END NOTE).

COMMENT

15. (SBU) With less than three weeks to election day, Humala has unquestionably taken over first place and is picking up the pace countrywide and amongst both sexes as he heads to the finish line. Flores, who had been falling one point a week, dropped three points over the past seven days. Most worrisome for her fortunes is that she fell by even more than that (five points) in her stronghold of Lima, and by four points amongst women (her core constituency). Garcia, on the other hand, has remained relatively stable. The Apoyo poll, which acknowledges that it only reflects 81 percent of the voting population, probably understates the effect of the isolated rural vote, which would add to Humala's numbers. Garcia would also likely benefit once one factors in the rural vote, and the APRA leader historically has had a "hidden vote" not reflected in the polls. END COMMENT.
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